

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An extremely large aircraft which is suitable for overseas cargo transport and which includes a fuselage defining a central storage cavity, a wing assembly defining a pair of wing storage cavities, an altitude control system, and a plurality of independently steerable landing gear units. The central storage cavity has a length, height and width of at least 100 feet, at least 16 feet and at least 24 feet, respectively. The wing assembly has a wingspan of at least 300 feet and is configured with a moderate aspect ratio to permit both ground-effect and high altitude operation. The altitude control system controls the aircraft in ground effect such that the aircraft is maintained at about a predetermined altitude. The landing gear units are coupled to the fuselage and are arranged in at least two discrete columns and at least ten discrete rows. The central storage cavity and the wing storage cavities are configured to receive cargo including intermodal re-usable cargo containers.

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